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PASS TO THE OFFICE OF REP. RICHARD D. MCCHARTHY, 528 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BLDG, WASHDC, FOR FORWARDING IMMEDIATELY TO MR. PAUL NEVILLE BUFFALO EVENING NEWS, BUFFALO N.Y.

BY REP, RICHARD D. MCCARTHY

CAN THO, VIET NAM, SEPT. 2 - ELECTION ZEAL HAS REACHED A FEVER PITCH THROUGHOUT SOUTH VIET NAM. MORE THAN 80 PERCENT OF THE ELIGIBLE VOTERS ARE EXPECTED TO VOTE TOMORROW IN THE CLIMAX OF THE MONTH-LONG CAMPAIGN.

BLARING SOUND TRUCKS, TORCH LIGHT PARADES, MOTORCADES,

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RALLIES, NSPEECHES ON RADIO AND TELEVISION AND MILLIONS OF CAMPAIGN POSTERS ON VERY AVAILABLE INCH OF WALL SPACE ASSAULT THE EYES AND EARS OF THE SOME SIX MILLION ELIGIBLE VOTERS.

ALTHOUGH CANNON FIRE THUDS IN THE DISTANCE AND FLARES ILLUMINATE THE C
UNTRYSIDE AT NIGHT THE WAR GOES ON, MOST OF THE PEOPLE GO BLANDLY ABOUT THEIR DAILY CHORES AND SEEM READY AND EVEN ANXIOUS TO VOTE. FEW OF THEM ARE WILLING TO WHILE SAY HOW THEY WILL VOTE. THE MILITARY TICKET OF GENS.

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THIEU AND KY WAS HEEVILY FAVORED AT THE OUTSET OF THE CAMPAIGN, CHINESE GAMBLERS IN SAIGON NOW RATE THEIR SLATE ONLY AN EVEN BETTO WIN. FORMER SCHOOLTEACHER TRAN VAN HUONG AND PRESIDENT PHAN KHAC SUU OF THE PROVISIONAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SEEM TO HAVE GAINED STRENGTH.

HE ENDING OOF CENSORSHIP IN JULY SEEMS TO THIS OBSERVER TO HAVE BEEN A SIGNIFICANT TURNING POINT IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS HERE. WHEN THE PEOPLE BEGAN TO SEE THAT THE RULING MILITARY JUNTA WAS BEING FREELY AND OPENLY CRITICIZED, THEY BEGAN TO BELIEVE THAT THIS ELECTION, UNLIKE SOME PREVIOUSLY HELD, WOULD INDEED BE FREE AND SECRET.

THERE IS A WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT THIS WILL BE THE FREEST

ELECTION IN SOUTH VIETNAM'S HISTORY. BUT MANY PERSONS ARE TROUBLED BY THE BARRING OF SOME CANDIDATES FROM THE BALLOT AND A MUCH-PUBLICIZED CHARGE THAT SOME SOLDIERS HAVE BEEN GIVEN MORE THAN ONE VOTING CARD.

CONGRESSMAN WOLFF AND THE WRITER TODAY ARE INTERVIEWING VOTERS AND INSPECTING THE ELECTION MACHINERY HERE IN THE INTENSELY GREEN, RICE-RICH DELTA REGION. TOMORROW WE WILL OBSERVE THE VOTING IN PLEIKU IN THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AND IN THE NORTHERN CITY OF HUE. WE WILL WAIT FOR RETURNS TOMORROW IN SAIGON.

ON FRIDAY EVENING WE ATTENDED AN ELECTION RALLY AT NGUYEN HUE AND LE-LOI IN THE HEART OF SAIGON WHERE WE TALKED WITH CANDIDATES TRAN VAN HUONG, PHAN KHAC SUU AND THE LLATTER'S

VICE PRESIDENTIAL RUNNING MATE, HARVARD-EDUCATED DR. PHAN QUANG DAN. DR DAN SAID THE CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN FREE AND OPEN BUT WAS LESS SANGUINE ABOU THE COUNTING PROCESS. PEACE CANDIDATE TRUONG DINH DZU BLISTESRED THE KY REGIME DURING THE HECTIC AND OFTEN UPRORIOUS SESSION DURING WHICH THE PUBLIC ASKED POINTED QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES. GENS. THIEU AND KY FAILED TO SHOW UP.

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OBSERVERS WERE TOLD THE SIZE OF THE CROTD WAS CUT OUT OOF FEAR THAT AN EXTRA LARGE TURNOUT MIGHT PROVOKE A VIE CONG ATTACK.

THIS MORNING, BEFORE FLYING HERE TO CAN THO, REP. WOLFF AND THEE WRITER INTERVIEWED CHIEF OF STATE THIEU AND LAST NIGHT QUESTIONED MR. HHUONG AT SOME LENGTH. HUONG OULD LIKE TO SEE AN EN TO WAR THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH WITHOUT U.S. AND OTHER FOREIGN PARTICIPATION. HE DOES NOT ENVISION THE VIET CONG AS A PART OF A FUTURE GOVERNMENT. THIEU, HOWEVER, SAYS THE VIET CONG COULD BE A LEGAL OPPOSITION PARTY IN TWO OR THREE YEARS.

IN A PRIVATE MEETING FRIDAY ATHT THE HHEAVILY FORTIFIED U.S. EMBASSY, U.S. AMBASSADOR ELLSWORTH BUNKER TOLD REP. WOLFF AND THE WRITER THAT HE SEES THE OUTCOME OF THE ELECTION AS HAVING A FAVORABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON THE PROSPECTS FOR PEACE. "A PERMANENT, FUNCTIONING GOVERNMENT," HE ASSERTED, "WOULD HAVE A GOOD PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT ON HANOI - INDICATING STABILITY AND PERMANENCE IN A GOVERNMENT WITH WHICH THEY COULD DEAL.

"HERE IN THE SOUTH," HE CONTINUE, "ITWILL HAVE A GOOD EFFECT BECAUSE THERE WOULD BE A GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THE PEOPLE'S RIGHTS WOULD BE RESPECTED AND WHERE THEY COULD INTEGRATE

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THEMSELVES INTO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FRAMEWORK OF THE NTION," HE EMPHATICALLY REJECTED THE CHARGE THAT THE ELECTIONS ARE FRAUDULENT.

REGARDING THE WAR, THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE "SEES A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL." HE CITED "STEADY BUT NOT SPECTACULAR PROGRESS" IN THE SOCIAL, MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SIDES OF THE CONFLICT AND DEPLORED ANY TALK OF A U.S. PULLOUT AT THIS TIME. HE SPECIFICALLY CITED THE EFFECT THIS WOULD HAVE NATIONS IN THE

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ARE FRONTING COMMUNIST CHINA INCLUDING JAPAN, INDIA, BURMA, AUSTRALIA, THAILAND AND LAOS.

IN THE MEANTIME, THHE HAT OF THE ELECTIONS RISES WITH THE TEMPERATURE IN THIS VER HOT AND HUMID LAND. IN THE LUSH, TEEMING CITY OF SAIGON THE ELECTION MOMENTUM IS TOPPED ONLY BUT THE INCREDIBLE, UNCONTROLED MOVEMENT OF VEHICLES OF EVERY DESCRIPTION. THE EXOTIC BEAUTY OF THE PEOPLE IS CHALLENGED ONLY SLIGHTLY BY THE BROAD, TREE-LINED AVENUES AND THE HANDSOME SHUTTERED, STUCCO HOMES THAT PROCLAIM THE LONG FRENCH INFLUENCE HERE.
BUNKER

NOTE: NOT PASSED BY OC/T.

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